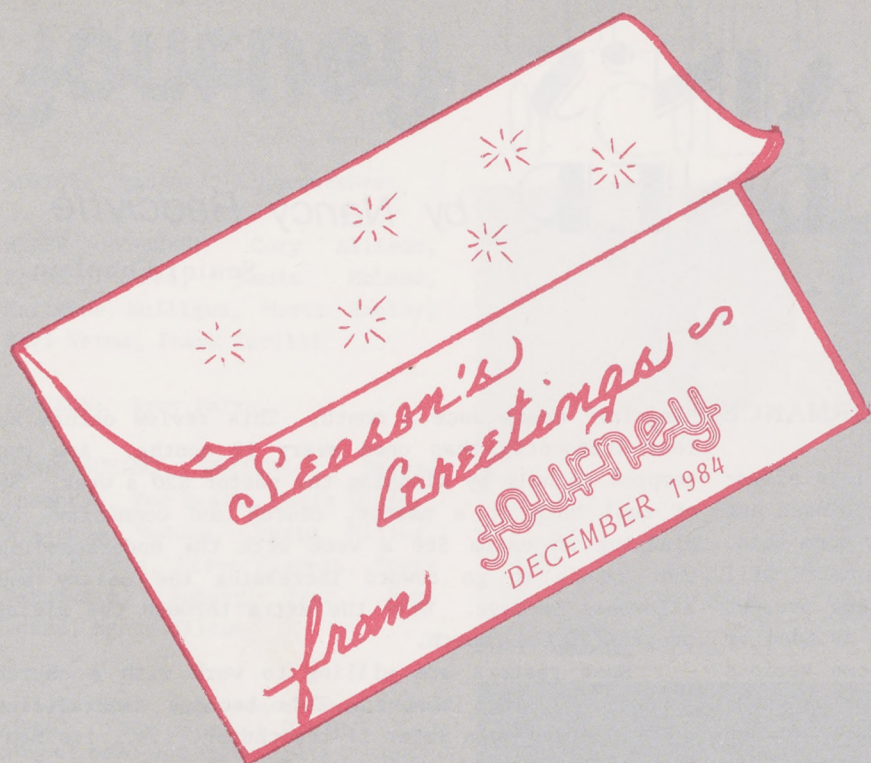






CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

by Nancy Radclyffe

Senior Chaplain

IMPROVING YOUR PASTOR'S PERFORMANCE

Many of us have seen a pastor become less effective, even to the extent that we feel disappointed and personally betrayed as if s/he has purposely done this. The next few issues of the "Chaplain's Corner" will discuss this phenomena, why it may occur and present some suggestions of how you can help it be avoided or change the apparent decline. Give each some serious thought in relation to your church and pastor and commit yourself to making a difference for your pastor and your church.

When a person, including those called to be pastors, cannot afford a new pair of shoes or food on the table their emotional well being is pretty low. To say s/he can ask for more salary or for a pair of shoes is to say, "It is okay with me if my pastor has to beg to live." A church owes a pastor a comfortable living, including housing allowance, salary and benefits. Some churches can afford more than "comfortable" and pay more. Hallelujah!

What happens when a pastor becomes demoralized? A variety of unhealthy things may occur with the pastor but it also affects you and the congregation at large. S/he like many professionals is paid to be creative: new Bible studies, new programs, new sermons, new counseling techniques, etc. A demoralized person is not a creative person. The church becomes boring as the pastor struggles for mere survival: emotionally, physically, spiritually and mentally.

A pastor, like others in the helping professions, is expected to care, especially when no one else seems to do so. A demoralized person does not feel cared for, does not feel as if s/he has any self worth and probably even as if God does not find her/him very worthy. Such a person cannot give the care that is appropriately needed or expected. Adequate salary, benefits and allowance packages for our clergy need to be high priorities. While we and our pastors are not of this world we are all in this world with its financial demands. As the church you take on the commitment of adequate financial reimbursement for your pastor's time, care, energy, sleep disturbed nights, etc.

The lay members of the board of directors have the responsibility of initiating a regular review of the pastor's salary, if the salary is below comfortable

"regular" means once a month. This review occurs no less frequently than once every 12 months. Are you tempted to help by slipping the pastor \$20 a week? Be of real help to a pastor, church and community, by pledging an extra \$20 a week with the understanding that it is to go toward increasing the salary and allowance package. Give the extra through the giving program of the church.

Most pastors are willing to work with a church through the lean months. This becomes demoralizing sooner rather than later if the church, i.e., its members, are not also stretching themselves in a variety of ways to increase the church income and then the pastor's income. Work out a clear understanding with your pastor which acknowledges your responsibility to pay a comfortable wage and outlines a timetable and ways for reaching it. If you fall short of those do not just ignore it. Bring it up at a business meeting so it can be evaluated and discussed openly. Do not leave it for your pastor to bring up. That is your responsibility.

Some of our pastorates and other Fellowship "clergy" positions are part time positions. Not necessarily because the demand is less but the ability or priority to pay a true full time salary is not there. In these cases it is the responsibility of the board to set, with the pastor, some very clear guidelines that spell out the time limitations of the pastor's availability for church/church people related needs. It is then the board's responsibility to clearly educate and inform the congregation of these and back up the pastor's position when s/he says not to someone or something. Only in this way can the pastor be truly free to pursue other part time employment.

The UFMCC has a policy that its clergy are to be "out of the closet" to family, community, the media, etc. Clergy are not usually licensed unless they are "out" and willing to be public. In small, homophobic communities this may well mean that your pastor/worship coordinator, clergy or lay, cannot get other employment. The spouse also may have to be underemployed or be unemployable. Because of this, if you want to have an MCC it is your responsibility to become creative in raising a salary/benefits package that is full time and comfortable, possibly for a living for two.

Now that we have moved to action by the church as

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JOURNEY

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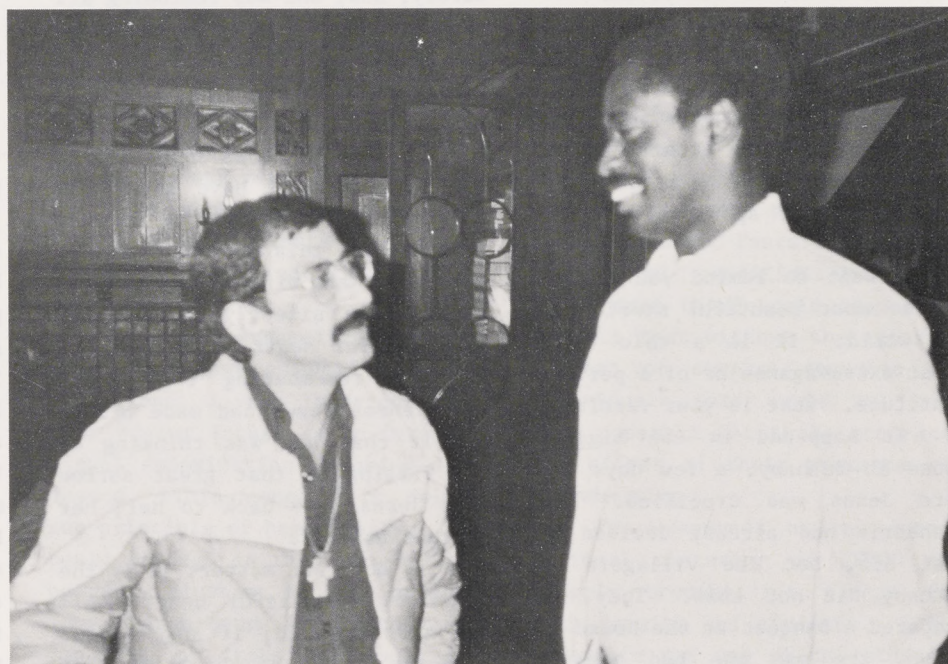
All materials submitted to JOURNEY
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The Editor will modify any language not
meeting these criteria.

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COVER: Cory Allison

Lesbians and gays of COLOR CONFERENCE



TOP: Mundo Galvez, MCC in the Valley, North Hollywood, CA, share their
feelings about the Third World Conference. MIDDLE: Participating in the
forum "Issues facing the Third World Community" are (from Left to Right):
Jose Mojica, Carole Haskins, Max Smith, Ravi Verma, James Tinney, Phil
Jones and Sandi Robinson. ABOVE: Business can be fun as demonstrated by
these womyn. (Photos by Barry Weiner)

World Church Extension

What is your verdict?

WHAT IS YOUR VERDICT?

Sermon

by Sylvanus O. Maduka
World Church
Extension Coordinator

Text: James Moffatt's Translation: What is the use of this waste? But Jesus was aware of what they said and he replied, it is a beautiful thing she has done to me. (St. Mathew 26: 8, 10)

Do you think love is ever wasted? If so, there might be moments in our lives when it would be right to shut up the very springs of love and either hate or become a mere automation, lifeless and morally or spiritually ineffective.

I want to remind you of one of the most beautiful stories in the world. It is a tale of a great extravagance or of a perfect gratitude. What is your verdict?

It happened in the biggest house in Bethany, a few days before Jesus was crucified. The Sanhedrin had already decided he must die, but the villagers of Bethany did not know. They had prepared a banquet at the house of Simon, the man who had been a leper...perhaps a man whom Jesus had healed. Martha was there; she indeed, shared in the preparation of the meal. Lazarus, who had been touched into new life by Jesus, sat with others, a miracle divine love.

Strange that Mary should be missing from the feast where all the friends of Jesus were gathered to do him honor. Presently she entered, carrying in arm, a little vase of alabaster. In a moment she was at Jesus' side. She had poured out the precious perfume over his feet. Then, to the scan-

dal of guests, she unbound her long hair as though she had been a harlot and wiped his feet with the tresses. Was it a memory of those far-off days in Magdala when he had saved her from an unutterable fate? There are those who identify her with the woman of that earlier incident, who also anointed Jesus.

If that be the case, then surely, now, she was reminding all that company of the great thing Jesus had done for her. No one knows whether they were two different women or whether they were identical. It does not matter much. I think I have known the two in one. All we can be sure of is that her, this Mary of Bethany, who loved him with a love beyond words, came silently to unburden her thankful heart. Was it that she was remembering that great forgiveness Jesus had made plain? Was it that she was thinking of the lifting of that great sorrow when Jesus gave back to her, her brother Lazarus?

It does not matter; it is the story of a grateful heart. All the harm she did, if any, sleeps with the gossip of the streets of Bethany. The company shocked, not because of the unbound hair, but because of the seemingly extravagance. To what purpose this waste? It might have been sold for six hundred naira (N600:00) and given to the poor. So the voices murmured. That was their verdict, but Jesus knew it was a beautiful thing she had done to him. More beautiful than she dreamed.

Surely there was, in Mary's heart, strange foreboding. The deep anguish in the soul of Jesus made itself felt in her receptive

spirit. She stood very near Calvary just then. Indeed, I wonder if any one ever came nearer. For a moment she was his very bodyguard, standing in the shadow of the Cross. She had entered into a new fellowship...she was the intimate of supreme love.

The people in the crowded room resented what they could not understand. "Waste"--murmured and whispered piously of hungry folk. Jesus turned on them. As James Moffatt translates it: Jesus knew and said to them it is a beautiful thing she has done to me. He pronounced the verdict which only perfect understanding could define. "Be quiet," Jesus seemed to say. It is a beautiful thing she has done to me. To that self-appointed jury it was the extravagance of a spoilt woman. To Jesus it was a beautiful deed offered to Love on its way to the final sacrifice. Which verdict do you think was right? Your answer and mine will depend on what we mean by consecration. I do not suppose she knew why she did it. Such actions are the mystery of love itself. "We are here on earth not to contemplate, but to transform created things."

During my first visit of the United States of America, in 1976, I read two little books, one a life of Abraham Lincoln, the other a pen-portrait of Jacob Behen, written by Dr. Alexander Whyte. The faith that burned within Lincoln's soul, burned through long and anxious nights, set my own afire. Great was the passion of his righteousness. Everything in the circumstances round about him did at one time or another make his neighbors and colleagues de-

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spondent and despairing. Lincoln's heart was rent and torn by persecution and yet in him was this immortal "But."

Jacob Behem was all his life, a shoemaker, with not one sunbeam of the world's prosperity on that thoughtful brow of his. He became one of the greatest of the mystics and the whole world is under debt to him for the beauty and brilliance of his thoughts about things divine. As he lay in sudden and severe sickness, sinking into death, with his Aurora and his Holy Week and his Divine Vision still unfinished at his bedside, he said to his son: "Open the door and let in more of that music." He heard the harpists touching their harps of gold.

Jacob Behem knew what depression was, knew as do we all, what it is to be sad and cast down. "O hear me;" he exclaims in one of his writings, "for I know well myself what melancholy is; I also have lodged all my days in the melancholy Inn." And then like Jacob of old, he gives utterance to this glorious and significant word "But," as if to say that above and beneath us, encircling us as the air we breathe, are the love and righteousness of God, who is the First and the Last.

So did Jacob Behem and Abraham Lincoln emphasize and underline, for me, this place where Job speaks with faith that turns from earth to God: But I know that my redeemer liveth. The work makes a turning point in the conflict going on in the soul of Job, giving him victory. The expositor refers to Job 19:25 this present chapter, the nineteenth, as a watershed. It is the crossing of a mountain top from which we see new landscapes of rare fruitfulness and fertility stretching forth before the face of the traveler.

What is your verdict? There is no further argument. He has lifted your poor gift and mine from Time in to Eternity. In the

quietness of this solemn hour he says of you and me: It is a beautiful thing they have done to me. They have given themselves.

I wonder if that might happen in this world of ours today, the little world so full of personal

troubles, the greater world so full of national mistrust and fear and hatred. After all, the light of love would make all the difference. It made a difference to Mary, didn't it? Now I can use them to bring in the God's Realm.

THIRD WORLD SCHOLARSHIPS

ORIENTATION TO MCC PASTORING 1985 by Sherre Boothman Dean, Samaritan College

UFMCC has become a denomination of international scope. As we saw in Rev. Elder Jean White's report to General Conference 1983, we are being called on by people in need of our ministries from all over the globe. More than ever before these requests are coming from nations called "third-world" countries.

In the evangelical church growth movement as well as other traditions, a very important concept to our future as an international denomination is being discussed. This concept is called the principle of homogeneity. The basic message is that people will be very reluctant to get involved in a church community if they are required to cross cultural, racial, or language barriers.

Rev. Renee McCoy explained this very well in her sermon at MCC Washington, D.C. at the close of the first Third World Conference. Renee focused on Moses' role in the Exodus. Moses was liberated from Egypt. As a liberated Jew, Moses had to go back to Egypt to free the Jewish nation. The Jews would have been very reluctant to be led by a non-Jew.

From years of church history, we know that church organizers must be able to communicate to the

people in the community to whom they are reaching out. While some are gifted at reaching across cultural barriers, most of us have a difficult time. Rather, our role is that of the midianites with Moses. As the community, we need to respond by supporting the training for qualified leadership in new areas of our reach.

Three students from ICM Mexico City attended the Dallas orientation to MCC Pastoring program. The economic conditions in Mexico, as in most third world countries, is such that without the generous support of several churches and individuals this would not have been possible for these students. The effect of their presence was overwhelming.

The awareness of the international character of UFMCC was sharply brought into focus for both faculty and students. Felix Escamilla was one of the students from Mexico City. He writes: "Having attended the Orientation Program in Dallas is one of the best things that has happened to me since I became student clergy. ..what has made the greatest impact on me is having experienced the companionship of 15 fellow students; wonderful people who have the same hopes, ideals, problems and experiences that I have. This has resulted in a lot of healing and a deeper understanding of my motives for being a student clergy and hopefully, soon, a li-

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aids ...

A Gay Man's Health Experience

A GAY MAN'S HEALTH EXPERIENCE

Part VI

by Steve Pieters
Contributing Writer

October 2, 1984

I find one of the tricks to coping with being a Person With Aids (PWA) is to stay really present to the present moment. To live into the moment. To love myself right now and the rest of life will flow. Life is very simple when I can keep it focussed right here, right now. And this moment I feel fine.

Sometimes I wonder at the fact that six months after the diagnosis my body keeps looking better and better. Working out has never been more fulfilling, more energizing. I look the picture of health. I feel stupendously well, and so I just settle into my body and enjoy it, it feels very full and sensuous and alive. I just don't believe that my body has a "terminal" disease. I believe there is healing in this attitude. When I am able to relax my body, feel my body and love my body fully, that is healing. And at this point I don't feel the disease they tell me I have.

Today, right now, my head feels erect and full of positive thought and images. My shoulders feel full and broad. My arms are energized to the ends of my fingers. My abdomen feels flat and tight, my back straight and in perfect alignment with my hips and pelvis. My legs are ever ready to dance! My feet, flat against the ground, enjoy the touch of the sole with the earth, my most immediate and constant connection with the planet. I feel and celebrate

my whole body. To talk about its separate parts is not to deny the interconnectedness, the joy of the blood flowing all through the body. It all works together in glorious harmony, keeping me alive and able to talk and dance and laugh and cry and minister. It is through my body that I love and move and have breath and eat bread. And this body is diseased?

How can I let it go? I can't right now. I won't let go of it today. Right now I am alive and I cherish that. I let go of being anxious about having aids, about death and dying. Everybody dies, just like me. My body feels just wonderful today.

October 9, 1984

There are persons with aids who are having terrible experiences and suffering greatly. The courage which is being shown in the face of this suffering is impressive. I feel a kind of awe

about many PWA's I have met.

I went to brunch with a group of PWA's I was proud to be among. One young Gay man had such a quiet beauty and dignity. Another has a joyous smile, a poetic body, a lively soul. The man next to me lost his second lover to aids and now his third has the pneumocystis form of aids. This man knows how to love, how to pay attention, to touch and to heal.

Another has tuberculosis as well as KS and seems to know most of the most handsome men in the restaurant. We had a great time talking about Fire Island, Provincetown, Key West, Laguna and Gay Pride Parades we had been to. We were a hot-looking table. We really are conscious of taking care of our bodies. Many Gay men cruised us that morning. I wonder how many of them realized they were cruising a table full of Gay men with aids?

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What kind of reality do we have here? Is this reality of disease and death a horrible accident of the universe? Is it a government plot? Is it a psychic creation of an oppressed group, who are unconsciously committing suicide? Is this disease a reflection of our internalized homophobia? Have we bought the homophobic rhetoric of our culture and are obligingly killing ourselves off? Are Gay men in their twenties and thirties dying off in such great numbers because we are so scared of being old and lonely? Have we bought the myth of our culture, that to be old and Gay is to be useless and miserable?

I am learning to love myself, forgive myself and be present to myself. I am learning to care for myself and my life. I am no longer afraid of being dead. What is the point? I will die, as will everyone and that fear is wasted energy. I choose to let go of that fear today.

I am learning to be responsible: able to respond to the circumstances of my life as a mature human being. I feel so lucky and grateful for my sense of life in the face of death. This whole struggle is about the affirmation of life in the face of death. What could be a more holy struggle?

October 15

"No Pain, No Gain." I learned that phrase early in my efforts at body building. It hurts to work the muscle hard enough to build it up stronger. One must break the muscle down, burn it out, exhaust it so that it will come back stronger and bigger and healthier.

Similarly, I am learning to change my attitude towards pain in the experience of dealing with my cancers. I am learning not to contract around the pain, not to clutch at it or let it tear me apart. I am trying to loosen my grip on the pain, let it go and transcend it. When I feel the

swelling and tingling around my neck, I am tempted to panic about the pain of the cancer. When I can relax the area and think of the tingling as God's healing fingers, the pain relaxes and I feel much better.

Ironically, the doctor confirmed this attitude of "No Pain, No Gain." He reminded me that when a wound heals, it swells up and gets tender, even a little painful. So the treatment I have been receiving might be stimulating the white blood cells to do their number and battle the cancer in my neck. That is the healing that I am feeling, not the cancer.

October 22

Early last summer, not too long after my diagnosis, I met a man at the gym. He was just my type and I was thrilled that he seemed to return the interest when we were out on the sundeck after working out. I gave him my phone number and he indicated he was really looking forward to getting to know me better. Somebody else came onto the deck who knew my situation and started asking me about specifics of treatment. My new friend asked with anticipated horror if I had aids. When I replied in the positive, he got terribly upset and left. I never heard from him, until a few days ago.

When I was at the hospital for treatment, he was in the cashier's line in front of me. He was diagnosed with Kaposi's Sarcoma a couple of weeks ago. He has quite an advanced case and will begin on an intense protocol of chemotherapy and alpha interferon, which may help him, but which will make him very sick. He has lost his job because of his diagnosis. He is desperately upset, angry and terrified. He told me he had somebody do to him what he did to me last summer. All his worst fears are being realized.

October 23

A friend in New York died last week. He had aids, which I

heard about a month before my own diagnosis. I have often wondered if I caught the disease from him. I understand that he had a very rough time before his death. That anger, fear and desperation are becoming all too familiar. But how I mourn for my friend. I join with David in his lament for his slain lover in II Samuel 1:25-26:

"How are the mighty fallen in the midst of battle!

Jonathan lies slain upon thy high places. I am distressed for you, my brother Jonathan; very pleasant have you been to me; your love to me was wonderful."

October 25

As I read over these entries from my diary, I am struck by the question of why I am doing so well, when aids is such a devastating disease. Do I only have a "mild" case of it? Am I at such an early stage that the devastating effects are yet to be felt? Or am I on the road to recovery? I was certainly desperately sick about a year and a half ago. Now I seem to be getting better and better every day. Other PWA's

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CONNECTION

by Ravi Verma
Director of Administration

In this last year I have had several occasions to participate or lead several gatherings/conferences of Gay men. Through that I have been networking with several men in different cities and in Los Angeles and we have been sharing what is going on in our lives and in our communities. What seems to be emerging in several places is a small, loosely structured and powerful movement of Gay men.

Some Gay men are somewhat suspicious of the "men's movement." They imagine such gatherings to be rabid sessions of men donning sack cloth and ashes and blaming ourselves for all the wrong in today's world! Many other men are very eager to find out more and explore new ways of relating.

Some women have been condescending in their attitudes ("Well, finally, the men are getting it together." "Do you have an agenda yet?") Many other women continue to be very encouraging and are willing to share what has worked for them.

My experience with men's gatherings has been limited, however, it has taught me that they can be places where a grown man can be playful, sing, dance, totally nourish and nurture himself and others. There can be safe places to share our dreams and fears, to get in touch with our nurturing side and to express our rage.

Ideally such groups can also teach us to unlearn the roles and expectations that society and culture have bound us to and together we can explore what we want to

keep and what we want to discard.

Often times our tendency, due to our socialization, is to relate primarily in intellectual and sexual ways. As a reaction, some men seem to be acting in ways that may seem to be anti-intellectual and/or sex negative. Our challenge continues to be to add emotional and spiritual ways in relating to our intellectual and sexual ways, thereby experience new ways of being intimate.

Another exciting element is that in such groups men's creativity, culture and spirituality can flourish and bloom.

I believe that there are lots of us who are looking for such a community and of such ways of connecting with each other. The presence and spread of aids amongst us has certainly compelled us to take a look at our life styles and our relationships. We are also having to examine our ability to respond to persons with aids and to the fears, concerns and paranoia of the "worried well" amongst us. Some of us persist in "denial" about the presence of aids and other of us are gradually beginning to share and support each other regarding our emotions and our ways of dealing with aids and with persons with aids.

There are no easy ways to find, nurture and sustain such a community of men. We do well on a one to one basis and with selected friends and we are learning how to develop those support systems in our entire community. It takes persistence and courage to get a group started and to take the personal risks to get beyond intellectualizing and to form new, uniquely masculine and liberating ways of intimate relationships. Sometimes such networks have formal guidelines and run for a

specific length of time, in other places these are informal groups, that form and reform their own. In all cases though, the energy and time are paid off handsomely through peak intimate experiences.

As we discover and form these groups/networks we need to share our successes, failures and stories with each other. Some of our churches (most notably MCC New York and MCC Seattle, WA) have men's programming that seems to be working well for the men in those communities. At least two districts (the Northwest and Northeast) have annual men's retreats. Many district conferences regularly schedule "men's sharing times." The "National Organization for Men" has local groups in many cities and hold regional and national conferences. Its publication "BROTHERS" is printed quarterly. For further information write: Dave Mattison, 814 Blackhawk Drive, University Park, IL 60466.

US GAY BOOKS SEIZED BY BRITISH CUSTOMS

ED DEAN IS QUEER and SECOND CROSSING, by San Francisco novelist N. A. Diaman, were two among 20 Gay and Lesbian titles seized by British Customs recently; from Gay's The Word, London's largest Gay community bookstore.

The entire 800 volume stock of imported books, 500 titles in all, was originally confiscated by five customs officers during a four and a half hour raid of the bookstore. It has been reported that most of the books taken have since been returned to the store but the remaining 200, whose titles are listed in the formal notice of seizure, will be destroyed if the charge of indecency is upheld in court.

WELCOME JIM VOLTZ

General Conference Coordinator Named

By Nancy Wilson

We are pleased to welcome to the Fellowship Staff, Mr. Jim Voltz, our new General Conference 1985 Coordinator. Jim comes to us from an illustrious career in management, public relations and sales. He has lived in numerous countries and has degrees in engineering and international economics. Jim has worked with Rev. Elder Don Eastman, in Dallas and has long wanted to find a way to put his talents to use for the Universal Fellowship. Welcome aboard JIM!

Plans for the 1985 General Conference in Sacramento, California are moving along at a brisk pace. The Theme, "Free To Be" (based on Galatians 5:1) will be carried out during the entire program and will be highlighted by a Human Rights Breakfast and Awards program on Tuesday morning. Our plans are to have Bishop Bill Black (Episcopal, Cincinnati) address the Conference, as Bishop Melvin Wheatley and Lucille Wheatley receive our biennial Human Rights Award.

The setting for next year's General Conference is in a modern convention facility with all the aids and amenities to create an atmosphere of celebration, realization as we work, worship and play together!

Registration materials will be in the mail to local churches the first week in December, so plan to register early! Mr. Danny Ray will be planning worship and music for the Sacramento General Conference. He promises beautiful and stirring music for our "family reunion" next year. For the first time, we will have an opening re-

ception, Sunday evening, following River City MCC's Sunday evening service (which will be held at the Convention Center. River City MCC is really going all out (under the direction of Rev. Elder Freda Smith) to do everything possible to have a terrific experience for all who attend General Conference. A "Night on the Town" is planned and a special reception following the Ordination Service, Saturday.

Set aside July 1-7, 1985. Look for registration materials at your church soon and save money by registering early!

EXCEL

Please take advantage of the opportunity to attend one of these upcoming Excel weekends:

March 15-17 McKenzie Bridge, OR

For more information on any of these weekends, contact one of the local teams in the San Francisco Bay Area, Los Angeles, Phoenix, Houston, Portland (OR), or Detroit.

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have expressed some envy and even resentment at how well I am doing.

I don't understand it as anything but God's grace. But then the question becomes why am I experiencing God's grace in ways that many others do not? I am uncomfortable with the notion of "chosenness" or "election." And yet I can see how there is a difference between PWA's who believe in some power beyond themselves and those who do not. The ones who do not believe in much beyond themselves find that when their "selves" are not doing very well, they don't believe in much and that seems to make them more sick. The ones who do believe in a Power greater than themselves find that when their "selves" are not doing very well because of the rigors of the disease, they can focus on that which is beyond themselves.

For me that Power is God as I know God through Jesus Christ and so even in facing my death, I can focus with assurance on my faith, which taught me, "If we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Christ. For we know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over Christ." (Romans 6:8-9) ...and..."For this perishable nature must put on the imperishable and this mortal nature must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: 'Death is swallowed up in victory.' O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?" (I Corinthians 15:53-55)

FRIENDS OF WALTER PHODES at All God's Children MCC, Minneapolis, Minnesota, are concerned about him and want to hear from him.

fellowship news

our journey

By June Norris
Clergy, St. John's MCC
Raleigh, N.C.

My heart was racing and my palms perspiring as I listened to Leo Teachout, president of the North Carolina Human Rights Fund. He was addressing the Criminal Code Revision Study Committee in the legislative building in North Carolina's capitol city. Being reviewed was section #25 concerning "crime against nature." As I heard Leo's closing remarks, I felt a surge of panic. I was next on the agenda.

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It was almost time for the session to begin and the room was rapidly filling. The media had arrived and were setting up cameras and mikes. I noted the infamous Bob Windsor was present. Windsor, editor and publisher of an underground-type-tabloid (*The Landmark*), had created quite a stir a few weeks back with a story stating Governor Jim Hunt was not only homosexual, but kept a female mistress in the governor's mansion. (He later retracted the story but continues to print "truths" about Gays/Lesbians).

I began to see familiar faces and felt relieved. There were 15 of "us" and approximately 80 of "them." All my brothers looked wonderful in suits and ties, Lynn in her matching jacket and pants and a sister from NOW neatly attired in skirt and blouse. I was comfortable in my full, long-sleeved dress with my clerical rabat. It was quite obvious that we didn't differ in appearance from the others. (No, Virginia, homosexuals do not have two heads, neither do they have that unmistakable depraved look).

They were first to speak. I thought I was prepared to hear the familiar Romans I and all about Sodom and Gomorrah incurred God's wrath against homosexuals. I just couldn't believe the distortion of facts I kept hearing! Someone said that 90% of all child molestations are done by homosexuals and 98% of all serial murders. One young minister said because he is small of stature he has been propositioned by homosexuals all his life. He told of having been kidnapped, locked in their rooms and was horrified to learn of their intentions. He said that when he began to pray and invoke the name of Jesus, those "hard-core-homosexuals" fell at his feet, weeping for their "gross sin."

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fellowship news

OUR JOURNEY

By June Norris
Clergy, St. John's MCC
Raleigh, N.C.

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dication we was speaking against the controversial statute remaining in the criminal code, sounds erupted, as if on cue. The moderator immediately called down the hecklers and demanded that all parties be heard. (They remained silent, but glared at each of us as we spoke). All who spoke for "us" were wonderfully composed and their speeches brilliantly presented. We had all dealt with our pain and anger as we listened to lie after lie and were determined "they" would not intimidate us!

Now, here I was, standing in the middle of that assembly. I was surprised that my voice functioned. I had imagined I would open my mouth and nothing would come out but a "croak!" I began...

"I am an ordained minister in the Universal Fellowship Metropolitan Community Churches, a Christian church with an outreach to the Gay and Lesbian Community. I believe in the separation of church and state. I strongly oppose public sex, sex by force and sex by adults with minors. We have existing laws to cover those crimes. I believe the crime against nature law invades privacy and legislates against the rights of individuals to choose their methods of sexual expression in the privacy of their homes. I resent the efforts of those who would impose their moral standards upon others. I believe each individual has the right to his or her personal relationship with their God. If Biblical passages were not subject to individual interpretation, there would not be numerous denominations, but only ONE church...the church of Jesus Christ. None of us has the right to judge another and each of us would do well to remember the words of Jesus, 'Let the one without sin cast the first stone.' I am convinced that God is GOD and the job is taken..." A few more sentences and it was over! My rubbery knees carried me to my seat. My mouth was dry. It was Lynn's turn and I

leaned forward to listen...

She said, "I believe in the Trinity; that Jesus Christ is the only son of God, fully human and fully divine. I believe in the inerrancy of the scriptures. I am a Christian. There is only one difference; I am a Lesbian." (She paused and I could almost hear a gasp as I noted surprised faces). Lynn began to quote scriptures and denied homosexuality had any bearing upon the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. "If you want to know the real cause of that destruction," she said, "I would suggest you read Ezekiel 16." She reminded them they seemed to fear the removal of the crime against nature law would enable Gays and Lesbians to teach their children. "They already are," she said. Lynn made it clear it is "natural" for Lesbians to be Lesbians and Gay men to be Gay. Her voice was clear and firm. I had the sensation that SOME of them were listening.

After the final person listed on the agenda had spoken, the moderator asked if anyone in the room needed to be heard. None came forward and a recess was called. We were immediately surrounded by questioners. When the meeting was reconvened we walked out into the hall, continuing our conversations. The youthful minister who claimed he has been harassed by Gays approached and asked if we could help him to understand our views on the Bible and homosexuality. For almost an hour, Lynn and I reasoned with and testified to one who still does not understand God's inclusive love.

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negotiations with our lawyers, they gave in, the permit was restored.

As we assembled with candles facing the water of the Inner Harbor, numerous tourists and late dinner goers gawked as various clergy and Jewish representatives led those gathered in a service of remembrance of those Gays and Lesbians who have been oppressed before us. Sixty-six area religious leaders endorsed the march, including Jewish, Roman Catholic (42 priests and nuns!), Presbyterian, Episcopal, Baptist, Lutheran, Quaker, Methodist and Ecumenical.

The sponsors included Dr. Douglas Miles of the predominately Black Baltimore Ministerial Alliance and Dr. Herbert Valentine, Baltimore Presbytery Executive, as well as the Roman Catholic and Episcopal ministries to Gays/Lesbians and various support groups in the city. This was a major ecumenical breakthrough in breadth and strength of religious support for Baltimore and one we plan to build on in the future as we work and pray together for justice.

**MCC COMES OUT
OF THE CLOSET**
by Ted Ewald
Worship Coordinator
Ray of Hope MCC
Syracuse, N.Y.

Sometime in the life of just about every MCC the discussion ensues of coming out of the closet. Just how much publicity should our churches receive and what are the problems associated with the coming out process. I don't think anyone would argue that we need publicity, but just where do we get it. We can advertise in the Gay/Lesbian media, the local Gay/Lesbian bars and local Gay/Lesbian organizations. This is quite "safe" and usually doesn't have any bad repercussions, or we can advertise in the strait media (radio, TV and newspapers). The later can be much

more difficult and sometimes painful. Each of our churches has to make its own decision as to where to advertise and how much to come out of the closet. The following is the story of the Ray of Hope's attempt to come out of the closet and meet with the newspaper media.

Reporter Visits

It all began on August 2, 1984. We received a phone call from Mary Hedglon, who introduced herself as a new religious staff writer for the SYRACUSE HERALD-JOURNAL newspaper. The HERALD-JOURNAL is the largest paper in Syracuse. She went on to say she read our submittals to the paper for our Sunday services for the church services section of the paper. She said she would like to come to our service on Sunday, bring a photographer and interview a few people for an article about our MCC Church in Syracuse. It all sounded quite innocent and sounded like it might be good publicity for our Ray of Hope MCC. We certainly would be able to reach some of the "non-bar" Gays/Lesbians who hadn't seen our advertisements.

Sure enough, on Sunday August 5, 1984, at 4 p.m., one hour before our church service was to begin, there she was, ready to start interviewing anyone she could. We explained that we would not allow any pictures to be taken during the service or by anyone that didn't want their picture in the paper. They agreed to these terms. We agreed to a picture taking session after the worship service. This service was scheduled to be conducted by Michael Royce, one of our lay persons on our worship committee.

After the service Mary began interviewing our members and discovered that the previous week there was a holy union conducted by our interim pastor Rev. Dr. Rodger Harrison. We then began concentrating on this area and interviewed the two Gay men involved

in the holy union. We took great pains to point out that this was what MCC called a "holy union." We were told that the article would be in the religious column on the following Thursday.

The following Tuesday the article appeared in the paper, not in the religious column but on page B1, the first page of the second section of the paper. The article was titled "New church is home for Gays" and was sub-captioned "Two men married at Syracuse Church." We had been meeting at Grace Episcopal church for over a year, so the titles were obviously written to stir emotions. The article emphasized the fact that "last week, two men from the congregation were married in Grace's sanctuary." Although we did get some of our points across about the MCC and what is was and what our church is doing, some of the article was completely false. Leave it up to reporters to screw up the facts. The article emphasized anything that was sensational and in my opinion was written to stir up the community, especially the Episcopal church. I knew when the article appeared that it was going to elicit some response.

By the following week many letters to the editor were received by the paper and were printed, a couple from local ministers. There were also a few letters of support. The letters against us ran about 10 to one. The following week the vestry (governing body) of St. Andrews Episcopal church in Syracuse wrote a letter to Grace Episcopal church, the Episcopal bishop and sent a copy to the local newspapers. On August 26, another article appeared titled "Stop Gay services St. Andrews tells Grace Episcopal."

The article included excerpts from the letter from the vestry. The letter stated, "to permit such practices in your church can only be construed as your acceptance of immorality and illegality under

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your auspices." The letter went on to say "homosexuality is against the scriptures. This organization (Ray of Hope) openly flaunts its members homosexual conduct without any acknowledgment that it is sin." In that article Michael Royce responded, "Nowhere does it say that Christ ever condemned homosexuality. Society put us down, but Christ did not. Christ said, 'Love on another.'"

"When they condemn us, they are stepping on God's toes. They are the sinners, not us," Michael said. "If they call themselves Christians, why do they go around condemning people?" he said.

Bishops Response

The next big surprise occurred with an article in the SYRACUSE POST STANDARD titled "Bishop Supports Opening Church to Homosexuals" and an article in the Syracuse Herald Journal titled "Episcopal bishop urges churches to reach out to Gays. The article goes on to say that the Episcopal bishop (Right Rev. O'Kelley Whitaker) of the dioceses of Central New York issued a pastoral letter supporting the church's decision to open its facilities to a congregation which has an outreach to Gays and Lesbians.

The Episcopal bishop went on to say, "From time to time, isolated verses of the Bible are used by Christians to justify condemnation of homosexual activities and ostracism of homosexual persons. Such use of the scripture is very dangerous. If one person is going to select certain verses to justify a position, another person is equally entitled to do the same for quite a different position.

"In the Gospels, Jesus expresses far greater concern over the spiritual health of persons who refuse to forgive their neighbors than he does over persons who engage in sexual acts outside of marriage. So far as I can determine, Jesus himself made no state-

ments specifically about homosexual persons and practices...The Anglican response to scriptures is to receive the Bible as a whole and to interpret it in a holistic fashion."

The newspaper article goes on to say that the Rev. Judith Upham, pastor of Grace Episcopal, said Sunday the vestry of St. Andrew's has a right to its opinion, but "we have no intention to stop allowing them (Ray of Hope) to use our church." Upham said her church's refusal to sever ties with Ray of Hope is a "reiteration of our own values, which is that Christ accepts everyone."

New York Times

The next surprise was a call from a reporter from the NEW YORK TIMES asking for an interview. We granted the interview. The reporter also interviewed Rev. Judith Upham, rector of Grace Episcopal church and the Rev. Robert F. Haskell from St. Andrews Episcopal church. The resulting article which appeared in the September 5, 1984 issue of the NEW YORK TIMES is probably the best synopsis of all the happenings. It deals mainly with the interview from the Rev. Judith Upham, who has made it quite clear that MCC is very welcome.

The TIMES article concludes with remarks from Upham. She says, "We need a place where virtues like fidelity and commitment are promoted. I think what we're doing is Christian. I think what we're doing is providing a place for people who have nowhere else to go."

Final Results

We received a lot of letters, both good and bad. Some telling us we're on the way to hell and others telling us they were looking for a church where they could be themselves, where they could be Gay/Lesbian and be Christian. We even received letters, as a result

of the NEW YORK TIMES article, from other parts of the country asking us where there was a local MCC that they could attend. Our attendance is up about 20%. We have a lot of people coming to check out this place where they can be themselves and worship Christ. Was it worth it...I think so.

THE SAME BUT DIFFERENT

by David W. Miller
Student Clergy WCE

We here in the United Kingdom have been blessed and encouraged by the knowledge that our sisters and brothers in Christ in the U.S. have found a new awareness and interest in our extension area. The "twinning" of our groups with a number of churches in the U.S. is an outcome of this. We have also recently been richly blessed by being visited by many of our sisters and brothers from America. We thank God for the opportunity this has given us for sharing and to be given a new awareness of our Fellowship, to learn of the activities within our sister Churches and to hear of the differences within the Gay/Lesbian community.

Indeed there is a real difference. Yes, we speak the same language, yes we dress much the same but despite the many similarities it can be overlooked that we are a very different people, we live in a different society, we have a very different culture. St. Paul soon learned as he began his ministry to the gentiles that they, although living along side the Jews, also with many similarities were indeed very different and lived under a different culture. Indeed he also learned that the Gospel of Jesus Christ did not require that they had to abandon their culture to receive salvation.

We indeed are grateful that there is a growing active awareness in the U.S. of our World Church Extension Area and we praise God that

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glorify god in your body

by Chris Glaser
Contributing Writer

(If used dramatically during worship, this dialogue has an element of surprise, because it begins as a sermon, or so it seems to the congregation, but is interrupted by a member of the congregation.)

PREACHER: Our text for today's sermon comes from Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, chapter six, beginning with verse twelve: "All things are lawful for me," but I will not be enslaved by anything. "Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food"...and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is not meant for immorality, but for the Christ, and Christ for the body. And God raised Christ and will also raise us up by power.

Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! Do you not know that one who joins oneself to a prostitute becomes one body with a prostitute? For, as it is written, "The two shall become one flesh." But one who is united to the Christ becomes one spirit with

Christ. Shun immorality. Every other sin which one commits is outside the body; but the immoral one sins against the body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God? You are not your own; you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

MEMBER: (muttering loudly) Oh God! Were it comes.

PREACHER: I beg your pardon?

MEMBER: Oh c'mon. With a scripture like that, we already know what you're gonna say.

PREACHER: Oh? What am I "gonna say"?

MEMBER: Probably that we should stop smoking.

PREACHER: Stop smoking?!

MEMBER: Yeah, since our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit. And smoking destroys the temple.

PREACHER: "The Surgeon General has determined that smoking is hazardous to your temple," huh?

MEMBER: Yeah--right, bout what I expected to hear.

PREACHER: But not what I expected to say.

MEMBER: What, you smoke?

PREACHER: No. Do you think I wouldn't speak against smoking if I smoke?

MEMBER: Sure. Everybody refuses to preach against anything they enjoy themselves, unless, of course, you're a hypocrite.

PREACHER: Only part of the time. No, I don't smoke. An I don't intend to preach about smoking.

MEMBER: Food! It's food you're gonna speak about, right? Don't eat too much food, because you won't fit through those pearly gates! No more twinkies, right?

PREACHER: I'm not going to preach against overeating--or twinkies.

MEMBER: Then it must be alcohol. This is going to be a sermon against booze and drunken parties. Or maybe drugs?

PREACHER: (becoming impatient) NO! Look, are we playing

20 questions?

MEMBER: Well, if you're not going to preach on smoking, eating, drinking or drugs, then what's left to preach about? What kind of church is this?!

PREACHER: There's something more important to talk about.

MEMBER: Something more important?

PREACHER: Can you guess what it is?

MEMBER: Now who's playing 20 questions?

PREACHER: Think about it.

MEMBER: (Sudden realization. Wide-eyed and horrified) Oh my God--not that!

PREACHER: Not what? You look like you've seen a ghost.

MEMBER: Better a spirit than what I thought of!

PREACHER: Why? What did you think of?

MEMBER: (Hissing the "s's", as if afraid to complete the word.) Are you gonna talk about s--, s--, s--

PREACHER: You sound like the snake in the Garden of Eden.

MEMBER: You don't have to remind me of dirty stories. You're gonna talk about s--, s--

PREACHER: (Trying to help the member by supplying words beginning with "s") Salvation?

MEMBER: (Becoming progressively frustrated) s--

PREACHER: Savior?

MEMBER: s--

PREACHER: Sin?

MEMBER: (Relieved to have the word out at last) SEX! You're gonna talk about SEX!

PREACHER: What made you think of sex?

MEMBER: You said "sin" didn't you?

PREACHER: Sex and sin don't always go arm in arm, y'know.

MEMBER: There you go--getting nasty again.

PREACHER: Why do you think I'm going to talk about sex?

MEMBER: After reading that scripture, you gotta talk about smoking, eating, drinking, drugs,

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or or, or s--, s--, SEX!

PREACHER: There's nothing else to talk about? Why are you so defensive about your body?

MEMBER: My body? There's nothing wrong with my body.

PREACHER: Now that's what I'd like to preach about.

MEMBER: You wanna preach about my body...?

PREACHER: No, not just yours, everyone's!

MEMBER: (Looking around the room) Then you're gonna have a long sermon!

PREACHER: Why?

MEMBER: Every body's here. (Smiles at attempt at humor.)

PREACHER: I want to preach about the value of our bodies.

MEMBER: Wait! Ya got it wrong!

PREACHER: Wrong?

MEMBER: Preachers are supposed to teach the value of our spirits, not the value of our bodies.

PREACHER: (Slight sarcasm in voice) Oh? Is that what preachers are supposed to teach?

MEMBER: It's the spirit that has value, not the body. That's why those olden times monks used to torture themselves--you know, whip themselves, wear chains of nails--and they weren't even into it! They disciplined their bodies so their bodies didn't control their spirits! No, bodies don't have value. They're like an empty shell in which we live.

PREACHER: You make us sound like peanuts! Or M & M's! If the body isn't of value, why did the early Christians believe in the bodily resurrection of Christ? And why did Jesus heal all those bodies that were lame, blind or deaf?

MEMBER: But those were just miracles to show who Jesus was--
PREACHER: Doesn't that show a valuing of those bodies, including Jesus' own body? What about the story of the Incarnation itself: God entered our world as a baby, "The Word became flesh"--

MEMBER: Why do you have to turn the Christmas story into pornography?

PREACHER: And why do we both-er being baptized?

MEMBER: Now, see, baptism proves my point. It washes off the dirty, sinful flesh.

PREACHER: But my flesh didn't fall off at baptism.

MEMBER: It would if you were the Wicked Witch of the West! What are you getting at?

PREACHER: What Paul is getting at in this passage from Corinthians! He's telling us to value our bodies.

MEMBER: Bodies die!

PREACHER: And Paul says, "And God raised Christ and will also raise us up...The body (is meant) for the Christ and Christ for the body. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?" Your body is a member of Christ.

MEMBER: How?

PREACHER: Baptism. Your baptism made you a member of Christ.

MEMBER: That makes me feel weird.

PREACHER: Perhaps it should. Paul thought Christians should base the way we are in the world upon our oneness with the body of Christ.

MEMBER: What does that mean? Aren't there any rules?

PREACHER: No rules. Just don't do anything Christ wouldn't do.

MEMBER: You mean, even roller-skating?

PREACHER: Where do you get the idea Jesus wouldn't enjoy rollerskating?

MEMBER: What about sex? I thought Jesus was celibate.

PREACHER: As far as we know; but he knew how to express love physically, through the senses, as he reached out his hands to those in need of healing. But I think you're getting the wrong impression. Next you'll be asking if it's okay to live into middle age because Jesus didn't!

MEMBER: No, next I was going to ask if it's okay to open an

IRA.

PREACHER: I think it's a question of a Christ-like attitude. Paul uses the image of joining one's body to a prostitute. Jesus wouldn't exploit people, so why should you in your sexual relating, or in any relationship, for that matter? How would Jesus relate to people? That's what you've got to ask yourself. It's a question not only for sexual relationships, but also for relating to strangers we pass by everyday: the hungry, the economically disadvantaged, the oppressed. How would Jesus relate to these people? You are a member of Christ--what do you think the Body of Christ should be doing?

MEMBER: Certainly not some of the things I do! And the body of Christ can't be sexual. I'm surprised I can say "sexual" and "the body of Christ" in the same breath!

PREACHER: Are your sexual expressions unloving?

MEMBER: Most aren't. But I can't imagine relating the body of Christ to even the most loving of sexual experiences!

PREACHER: Then perhaps you haven't accepted God's gift of sexuality. Someone, somewhere, sometime told you your sexuality was bad. But God doesn't create bad things.

MEMBER: Is love the only criterion by which to judge sexual relationships?

PREACHER: Isn't that the best criterion to judge any relationship? Love is also the criterion for judging our relationship with our bodies. Do you love your body?

MEMBER: It gets me through the day.

PREACHER: But do you love your body?

MEMBER: Isn't that narcissism? I don't remember Jesus recommending that. Love your neighbor, even your enemies, but not your body!

PREACHER: "Love your neighbor
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Where's the fig leaf?

By Robert W. Twar
Pastor, MCC Wichita

(This is basically the Sermon delivered at Gay/Lesbian Pride Week, June 24th, 1984 at MCC Wichita special worship service.)

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

We hear and see through news reports of revolutions of various kinds taking place around this planet of God. We probably all have various opinions about their worth and value in terms of their goals. Most of the time we think of revolutions in terms of warfare between smaller nations or the two superpowers. However, there are other kinds of revolutions. Recently in an issue of TIME magazine they dealt with the sexual revolution and whether it had ended or not. With most revolutions there is usually a period of excesses. I believe that both the "straight" and Gay/Lesbian community is starting to examine and sort out some of the excesses of the past 15 years. For our community it is since the period of the Stonewall Revolution.

I have selected Paul's writing to the Galatians. He writes in Chapter 5, verses 1 and 13: "When Christ freed us, Christ meant us to remain free. My sister/brothers, you were called, as you know, to liberty; but be careful, or this liberty will provide an opening for self indulgence."

"Where's the Fig Leaf?" Psychologist Rollo May has written, "In modern times the fig leaf has moved to the face." He is talking about relationships in which sexuality substitutes for personal intimacy and affection. We fly to the sensation of sex in order to avoid the passion of eros. In other

words, sex without a deep and growing personal relationship. No relationship can survive on sex alone. There must also be a personal relationship. The Victorians were so shy about sex that they repressed it and caused themselves neurotic guilt and anxiety. The Victorian nice man or woman was guilty if he or she experienced sex, now we are guilty if we don't. I believe that one of the excesses of the "sexual revolution" of today for both communities is we are so bashful about personal relationships, that we are repressing it and thus causing ourselves guilt and anxiety.

Victorians tried to have love without falling into sex. Today we try to have sex without falling into love. For the Victorians personal commitment was not necessarily sexual commitment. For moderns, sexual commitment is not necessarily personal commitment. Unhappy relationships in Victorian times could be attributed to striving for personal growth as though sex had nothing to do with it. In modern times there are unhappy relationships because people strive for sexual growth as though personal relationships have nothing to do with it. The solution, I believe, for us, is found in treating each other as human beings who have three major needs: (1) PERSONAL FULFILLMENT, (2) CRAVING FOR AFFECTION, (3) SEXUAL COMMITMENT (in its various forms, but some kind of sexual commitment.) If we want to succeed in our relationships we must always treat each other as persons and try to minister to ALL each other's needs. Sexual commitment is probably self-evident to us. Personal commitment may not be

so clear. A personal commitment that calls on us to minister to each other's fulfillment and craving for affection.

In the film of the '60's, THE GRADUATE, Mrs. Robinson wants to have sexual commitment without personal relationship. Her lover played by Dustin Hoffman, asks her, "Don't you want to sit and talk awhile. Can't we show each other some affection?" Her negative reply shows she has a diminished view of how human beings should treat one another. Psalm 8 says that God has made us just a little less than the angels. Mrs. Robinson thinks we are just a little more than an animal.

We are, of course, neither angels nor animals. Personal commitment with no sex would make us disembodied angels. Sexual commitment without a personal relationship would reduce us to an animal level.

The message to be emphasized is about treating each other in a totally human way. (1) PERSONAL FULFILLMENT, (2) CRAVING FOR AFFECTION, (3) SEXUAL COMMITMENT. Any permanent denial of one's three deepest needs will cause us eventual unhappiness and potential shipwreck.

If we need any urging in a culture like ours, it is probably in the area of intimacy, affection and fulfillment. The fig leaf is on too many faces, hiding the hunger for personal love and affection. "My sisters and brothers, you were called, as you know, to LIBERTY; but be careful, or this LIBERTY will provide an opening for self-indulgence. Serve one another..."



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as yourself." As Martin Luther said, you've got to love yourself properly.

MEMBER: But my body is not myself! I'm a spirit--I'm not my body!

PREACHER: The Jewish and Christian concept of "soul" referred to both spirit and body, the physical and the spiritual.

MEMBER: What you're implying in all this talk of valuing the body and Christians being members of the body Christ--

PREACHER: --by virtue of baptism--

MEMBER: --by virtue of baptism ...You're suggesting there are implications for exactly what you said you weren't going to preach on: smoking, pigging out, drinking, drugs and sex! I mean, all those things, ya gotta think about differently.

PREACHER: And the physical needs of the neighbor, the stranger, the needy. You have to think of them differently, too, because the body of Christ reaches out to them only if you do. Value your body and others' bodies as the body of Christ, making sure every body gets proper care and enough hugs. That's how Jesus brought healing to the lives of everyone he touched.

MEMBER: Sounds like a lot of work. Can't you just give me some "thou shalt not's?" Tell me to quit smoking, maybe.

PREACHER: Go to Schick for that. I can't tell you to quit smoking!

MEMBER: Aren't preachers supposed to tell us what we're not supposed to do?

PREACHER: Even God is not keen on telling what not to do; God prefers to tell you what you could be doing.

MEMBER: I know, I know. Value my body. Care for the bodily concerns of others. It feels like a commercial for milk!

PREACHER: "Glorify God in your body."

MEMBER: Too much work! I think I'd rather die!

PREACHER: "All things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be enslaved by anything...Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?...Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God? So glorify God in your body."

PARENTS FLAGG CONVENTION

Several hundred delegates, representing more than 160 parent groups and contact, attended the third international convention of the Federation of Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (Parents FLAG) held in Denver, September 28 through October 1, 1984.

Adele Starr, national president of the Federation of Parents FLAG, stated after the annual meeting of the National Board of Directors, "We will be continuing our religious project for 1984-85. We want to work with the religious community in bringing reconciliation to families--in reaching out to one in four families that have a Gay/Lesbian family member."

Commenting on the recent Violence Project of the National Gay Task Force, Starr continued, "We are very concerned about the documented violence and hostility against our children and we appeal to the churches and the clergy to join with us in stopping the violence. It is a shame to use religion to hurt our Gay sons and Lesbian daughters and we will no longer remain silent while homophobic violence continues at such an alarming rate."

For referral to a local Parents FLAG chapter or contact person, call (213) 472-8952, or write: Federation of Parents FLAG, Inc., P.O. Box 24565, Los Angeles, CA 90024.

"POSITIVELY GAY" OUT OF THE CLOSET AGAIN

POSITIVELY GAY, Dr. Betty Berzon's popular book on dealing with the challenges of Gay and Lesbian life, out-of-print for the past 1½ years, has been republished this month by Mediamix Associates of Los Angeles.

Described by the Los Angeles Times as "...a must for anyone who has opened the closet door...POSITIVELY GAY provides how-to information on telling the family you're Gay/Lesbian, making the couple relationship work, dealing with religious issues, being a good Gay/Lesbian parent, adjusting to aging, planning for financial security and building a stable and satisfying social and professional life.

A unique feature of the book is the POSITIVELY GAY DISCUSSION GUIDE designed to enable people to talk more productively about Gay and Lesbian issues.

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censed clergy."

In response to the needs of UFMCC, Samaritan College is opening a Third World Scholarship Fund for the orientation to MCC Pastoring 1985. These funds will be distributed to Third World people living inside and outside the USA who have a commitment to pastoring in UFMCC.

We hope you will participate in this effort to facilitate leadership development for our future growth. Please send your contribution to:

Samaritan College
Rev. Sherre L. Boothman
3327 Beverly Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90004

For more information, feel free to call (213) 387-8086.

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there is love enough to want to help us for if we in MCC in this area are to grow within the Universal Fellowship we need your help, your love and your support but please do remember we are a different people.

Firstly our heritage is so very different. We have a great heritage which goes back very far--a heritage which we as a nation are proud of. We are a proud people. You can see some of this heritage in our rich history, in our historic buildings but you are unable to assess the effect this heritage has on each of us.

Our religious heritage is no less rich and real. Again this can be seen in some of our church buildings and our church liturgy. Those of you who have seen something of this will have been able to appreciate the beauty, the historic value, but can you also appreciate the effect this heritage has on our attitude to God, to worship, to prayer, to praise, to the Christian walk of life, to new schools of thought such as inclusive language and being Christian and Gay/Lesbian? Our heritage has an effect. We are a proud people, we are also conservative and reserved. We don't like change and we are slow to accept change.

Our culture is also greatly influenced by our heritage and when studied shows the conservative side of our nature. Our society is geared to the average family officially determined as mother father and 2.5 children.

For the Lesbian and Gay man there is still no real acceptance within society. Indeed in many ways the rejection is more acute at times. As our society comes to learn we are here the non acceptance becomes more subtle. At one time we were ignored. We did not exist. Today as so many of us have come out of the closet society can no longer continue in that belief and in many ways this has meant that sectors of society have had to declare their rejection.

Because society is geared to

the "norm" of a family, single people find real difficulty especially in the areas of housing and social benefits, etc. Housing authorities have no responsibility to house single people, therefore very few make any provision for single accommodations even in proven cases of extreme need.

Mortgage provision is also geared for the "norm" family which makes the purchasing of accommodations for unmarried people impossible for most. This then leaves the private accommodation sector as the only alternative for most Lesbians and Gay men and this always proves expensive as demand always heavily outways the supply.

Although many Gay men and Lesbians in this country are exerting pressure on Government and local authority for change, again, because of our governmental heritage, this is a slow slow procedure. One of the biggest problems to overcome is our national apathy, but perhaps more important, apathy of the homosexual community to seek change for itself.

Apathy is also seen very acutely in the church and religious life of our nation. In England sadly only 2.5% of the population attend church. I understand the figure in the U.S. is more like 52%. Here the majority of people only ever attend a church for a christening a marriage or a funeral and then only because it is the done thing, part of our heritage.

Yes we are moving, we are

a whole, remember that as an individual you can begin these actions (a plan to increase salary, to clearly define and support a part time schedule, etc.) by bringing them to the attention of the board and/or congregational meeting. The board, rather than the congregational meeting usually initiates such decisions as allowances and salaries, paid vacation, benefits, retreat and personal time off. If you do not think they are adequate you have the right to bring that point to the attention of the board or congregational meeting and then hold them responsible for follow through. You can also do this to simply request a review to see if they are adequate and fair if you are uncertain.

SLACC's NEW address: P.O. Box 9170

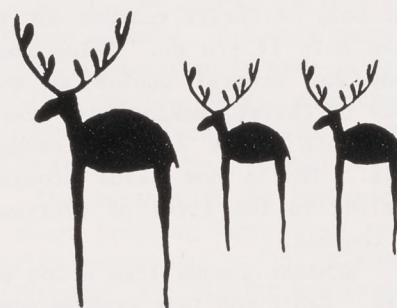
Anaheim, CA 92802

(714) 758-8141

changing, but much of our movement and change is slow. Those of us in UFMCC are glad to be members of a wonderful loving and accepting family. We are glad that you are there. We are grateful for your witness. We thank God for your support.

SHARE YOUR "GOOD NEWS" WITH OTHERS

JOURNEY would like to feature some human interest stories in the future. Has some individual or group in your church gone out of their way to be of Christian service? Had a unique or interesting ministry? Deserve to be recognized for their selfless and giving attitude? Please let us share it with others. Submit material to: *JOURNEY* 5300 Santa Monica Boulevard, Suite 304, Los Angeles, CA 90029.



WE CARE!

DO YOU CARE?

TOGETHER

WE COULD

CARE

EVEN MORE!

"Look at the Metropolitan Community Church today – the Gay Church – almost accepted into the World Council . . . National Council of Churches. Almost. The vote was against them. But they will try again and again until they get in. And the tragedy is that they would get one vote. Because they are spoken of here in Jude as being brute beasts – that is going to the baser lust of the flesh to live immorally and so Jude describes this as apostasy. Thank God this vile and satanic system will one day be utterly annihilated and there will be a celebration in heaven."

From a Sermon on the TV Program "Old Time Gospel Hour" by Rev. Jerry Falwell, President, Moral Majority.

No, Jerry, that's not what Metropolitan Community Church is like because:



We are a caring, loving group of people.

We have created a 60-minute television documentary to confront those kind of lies, and others made by people like you who preach that we, as Lesbian and Gay males are brute beasts, not people.

Our documentary portrays the lives of women and men in the Gay community praying for and struggling to secure freedom and liberation for all people . . . teachers . . . Cuban Refugees . . . Third World People . . . persons with AIDS . . . Gay parents . . . the churched and unchurched . . . youth and seniors . . . sisters and brothers around the world who seek peace and prosperity. We have shared on tape the truth that spirituality and sexuality are compatible.

Mr. Falwell, I am asking my friends for help to show it like it is. I am asking them to please send their tax-deductible donations to me to get this message on the air. And it will be on the air because my friends care.

GOD, GAYS & THE GOSPEL: This is OUR story.

A television presentation of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches.

YES! I would like to answer Jerry!

- ☐ AN ENABLER: Minimum donation of \$50.00 per year.
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- ☐ A CONTRIBUTOR: Minimum donation of \$500.00 per year.
- ☐ A PARTNER: Minimum donation of \$1,000.00 per year.
- ☐ I cannot join at this time, but keep me on your mailing list.
- ☐ Enclosed is my donation to help defray costs.

Send your tax-deductible donations to:
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